

# Ex-US envoy to rule post-Saddam Iraq

AFP, Washington

A former US ambassador to Yemen would be named as the interim civil administrator of the Baghdad region under a US plan for a post-war reconstruction of Iraq, US officials said Friday.

The officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said the plan calls for dividing Iraq into three sectors with each being run by a separate interim civil administrator during the transition to some form of democratic government.

US military commanders will be responsible for securing their areas in the immediate aftermath of a war, but then the job of rebuilding and governing would be turned over to the interim transitional civil administration, the officials said.

Overseeing the effort will be retired general Jay Garner, who is heading the Pentagon's Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Affairs but after the war would become the interim civil administrator in Baghdad.

Under him would be a civil administrator for the north, another for the south and a third

for the center of the country, said a US official, who emphasized it was "a division of labor, not a division of the country."

Two retired US generals would be the civil administrators in the northern and southern sectors while the central sector that includes Baghdad would be administered by Barbara Bodine, the former US ambassador to Yemen, according to the officials.

"That would fall into her sector," said another US official, who asked not to be identified.

"She'd be a big player," said a senior US defense official.

The other two civil administrators would be retired generals F.J. "Buck" Walters and Bruce Moore, an official said.

President George W. Bush has not decided to go to war against Iraq but a group of officials from throughout the government drew up the plan as a "prudent precaution," the official said.

Bodine was ambassador to Yemen when al-Qaeda terrorists rammed an explosives-laden boat into a US Aegis destroyer on October 12, 2000, killing 17 sailors and nearly sinking the billion-dollar ship.

She spent much of her career as a diplomat in southwest Asia and the Arabian peninsula, with postings that included Baghdad from 1981-1983.

She was deputy chief of mission of the US Embassy in Kuwait when Iraqi forces invaded and occupied the country in 1990.

Defying an order by Iraqi President Saddam Hussein for all embassies to close, the US embassy stayed open and provided shelter for more than 200 Americans through the occupation.

Bodine received a Secretary of State's Award for Valor for her work during that period.

She also has had first hand experience with terrorism. She negotiated the release of three kidnapped Americans in Yemen in 1999 and was a passenger on an airliner that was hijacked from Yemen to Africa in 2001.

After coming home from Kuwait, she served as the State Department's acting coordinator for counter-terrorism.



PHOTO: STAR

Unemployed diploma nurses stage a hunger strike at the Central Shaheed Minar yesterday, demanding jobs.

## PM opens road march

FROM PAGE 1

and special facilities, she said: "Now we have traversed a long way in protecting women's rights and ensuring their development, welfare and empowerment."

Now women of the country are not confined to the cage, she said while referring to a research report titled 'Birds in the Cage' on women's situation in Bangladesh.

Khaleda Zia however said women still continued to be victims of discrimination and repression despite government's multifaceted efforts including implementation of various resolutions of international and regional forums and enforcement of tough laws to prevent repression on women.

So, much more remained to be done still for women's advancement, the prime minister said.

US Ambassador Mary Ann Peters said the presence of the prime minister in the event signalled a "strong commitment of the government of Bangladesh to raising the status of women."

She appreciated a number of achievements regarding promo-

tion of the status of girls and women and "in tapping a valuable and growing resource in the country's 21st-century push for development".

She lauded the successes that include micro-credits, girls' participation in primary schooling, women's jobs and commitment to combat women and children trafficking.

Pointing out statistics of anti-trafficking convictions in Bangladesh, Peters said that in 2000 there were zero convictions for the crime. But the number rose to 3 convictions in 2001 and 29 in 2002 with the hard work of law-enforcement officials and support from NGOs.

Though the number is small, but this is "a record in South Asia," the US diplomat observed.

She also appreciated a consensus reached by the government, NGOs and donors on using one logo, one message and one set of materials for all anti-trafficking initiatives -- first such in South Asia.

## Abbas nominated Palestinian prime minister

REUTERS, Ramallah

President Yasser Arafat announced yesterday the nomination of senior Palestine Liberation Organisation official Mahmoud Abbas as prime minister of the Palestinian Authority.

Arafat did not set a date for the appointment or elaborate on the powers the prime minister would wield in his speech to members of the PLO's 122-member Central Committee in the West Bank city of Ramallah.

"Our brothers in the executive committee have agreed on the initiative of naming my brother Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) prime minister of the Palestinian National Authority and we are seeking your consent," he said.

Arafat has been under intense Western pressure to rid the Palestinian Authority of corruption with widespread reforms and appoint a powerful prime minister to govern the day-to-day affairs of the Authority.

Officials said on Thursday that Arafat had asked Abbas, who is also known as Abu Mazen, to do the job. Abbas said he would only accept if the role embodied enough powers to effectively run the Palestinian Authority.

# Oil refinery attack

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were sent to battle the fire.

The refinery was still blazing 18 hours after the attack. A spokesman for the refinery, S.B. Lahkar, said authorities had decided to wait until the fire burned itself out.

"You can feel a pungent stench in the air that is virtually choking people, with the skyline filled with a black cloud of smoke due to the fire," said Arunima Das, a doctor who lives about five kilometers from the refinery.

A flagship of the state-owned Indian Oil Corporation, the refinery produced about 650,000 tons of crude oil annually, along with high quality wax and petrochemicals.

Legend holds that the refinery was built in 1901 by British colonial rulers after they noticed an elephant working on a railway project in the area had oil covering his feet.

With several big petroleum tanks adjacent to the refinery, officials said they were using cool-

ing devices to stop the fire from spreading.

The pipeline fire was put out after authorities shut down crude supply, police said. No injuries were reported.

Assam is home to a number of tribal separatist groups fighting for greater autonomy or independence. More than 10,000 people have died in insurgency in the state in the past two decades.

Assam rebels have often targeted oil installations, bridges and railway tracks.

Five years ago, ULFA militants lobbed grenades into a major crude oil depot, reducing it to ashes.

Separately Saturday, three people were killed and four injured when suspected ULFA militants attacked a village in the Goalpara district, 168 kilometres west of Guwahati, the police spokesman said.



PHOTO: STAR

Acid victims hold a placard protesting acid violence on women at a programme of the Acid Survivors Foundation at the Jatiya Press Club on the International Women's Day yesterday.

# Astle zaps Zimbabwe

FROM PAGE 1

Steak rebuilt the innings patiently during a 68-run stand with Tatenda Taibu (53) after his side had slumped to 106 for six, and then teamed up with Irvine.

A savage assault resulted in 62 runs, almost a quarter of the team's score, coming off the last 18 balls.

Streak, who ended on 72 not out, and Irvine, who made 31 from 14 balls, hit eight fours and three sixes in those final three overs.

Captain Stephen Fleming led from the front as New Zealand set off in pursuit of Zimbabwe's 252 for seven. Fleming stroked 10 fours in his 46 from 42 balls, including three in a row from Streak.

After his dismissal, Astle took responsibility for the innings, against an attack lacking leg spinner Brian Murphy who took a calf muscle practising in the break between innings.

He refused to take chances, preferring to play straight and take the singles, a strategy which ultimately paid off handsomely.

His 13th one-day century took 122 balls, contained 11 fours and kept New Zealand on course to reach the semifinals.

"It was a big one," said Astle, who was named man-of-the-match. "We have to win today, we were probably chasing a few too many at the end."

"Cairnsy and I got the partnership we needed and it all worked out well. We had a couple of overs to spare."

Fleming said the game had been in the balance when Cairns joined Astle. "It was the biggest partnership of the game and the guys did it well," he said.

Streak said his team had been about 30 runs short.

"It could have been a much tighter game. We lost those wickets and we also lost a couple of guys through injury," he said.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the World Cup Super Sixes match between Zimbabwe and New Zealand at Goodyear Park on Saturday:

ZIMBABWE					
C Wishart	c Styris	b Cairns 30			
D Ebrahim	b Adams	0			
A Flower	run out	37			
G Flower	c Cairns	b Oram 1			
G Whittall	c McCullum	b Cairns 0			
T Taibu	b w b Harris	53			
A Blignaut	run out	4			
H Sreak	not out	72			
S Ervine	not out	31			
Extras:	(lb-9, w-13, nb-2)	24			
Total:	(For seven wickets in 50 overs)	252			
Fall of wickets: 1-5, 2-59, 3-63, 4-65, 5-98, 6-106, 7-174					
Bowler	O	M	R	W	
Bond	10	1	37	0	
Adams	5	0	54	1	
Oram	10	4	28	1	
Cairns	4	0	16	2	
Vettori	1	0	52	0	
Harris	10	0	45	1	

## Train accidents

FROM PAGE 1

authorities to do renovation work with its earnings, which is a 'tough task', they said.

But a top official of the engineering department said condition of tracks is "better now". Most of the accidents in the recent past took place due to mechanical faults with coaches and goods wagons, he claimed.

The BR has completed renovation of nearly 450 kilometers of rail track in its Eastern Zone by replacing wooden sleepers with concrete sleepers, he said.

Though the tracks in Akhaura-Sylhet, Bhairab-Mymensing-Bahadurabad and Jamalpur-Jagannathganj routes are in reasonably good shape, those also require renovation, he said.

A project paper has been submitted to the government for renovation of rest of the tracks across the country, he said.

Tracks in branch lines both in the Eastern and the Western zones require immediate renovation. The BR submitted a Tk 3 crore project for repair of the Chittagong-Dohazari branch line. But the government returned it asking the BR to minimise the cost, he said.

Astle 1 0 11 0

NEW ZEALAND

C McMillan c Taibu b Hondo	8
S Fleming lb w b Blignaut	46
N Astle not out	102
S Styris c sub (Friend) b Blignaut	13
C Cairns b Irvine	54
C Harris not out	14
Extras: (lb-5, w-10, nb-1)	16
Total: (For four wickets in 47.2 overs)	253
Fall of wickets: 1-27, 2-72, 3-97, 4-	

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Streak	10	0	59	0
Hondo	8.2	0	52	1
Blignaut	10	0	41	2
GFlower	10	0	33	0
Whittall	3	0	19	0
Ervine	6	0	44	1

Result: New Zealand won by six wickets

Man-of-the-match: Nathan Astle

Toss: Zimbabwe

Umpires: Rudi Koertzen (Rsa) and Darrell Hair (Aus)

TV umpire: Asoka De Silva (Sri)

Match referee: Gundappa Viswanath (Ind)

## Young man shot dead in Rupsha

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

A young man was gunned down by unidentified assailants at village Anandanagar under Rupsha upazila on Friday night.

Witnesses said the assailants called Nakib Biswas, 24, out of his house at around 8:30 pm and shot in the neck, chest and abdomen.

He died on the spot.

On information, Rupsha police rushed to the spot and recovered the body at about 10:30 pm.

They sent the body to Khulna Medical College Hospital (KMCH) morgue for autopsy.

Police said Nakib Biswas was a listed criminal.

None was arrested in connection with the murder till yesterday evening.

## Bangabazar

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Department (CID), constables Shafiqul Islam (1), Mahbub Alam, Jamal Hossain and Shafiqul Islam (2) of the Special Branch (SB), constable Nawsher Ali of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) and informant Nuruzzaman alias Swapan.

In the case filed with Ramna police station on February 6, it was alleged that the nine were caught when they went to Bangabazar Hawkers' Market to abduct an Indian hundi (money sent illegally) trader Suresh for extortion.

Later, Suresh filed an extortion case under the Law and Order Disruption Crimes (Speedy Trial) Act, accusing them.

The investigation officer of the case submitted a charge sheet on February 17, showing 13 people as prosecution witnesses.

## Acid burns

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cal company and Peyara Begum.

To mark the day, another NGO - Telecine Subtext - held a rally in front of the Bangladesh China Friendship Conference centre and brought out a procession with the slogan-- 'End Violence Against Women'. The programme was organised with assistance from the UNFPA.

The slogan of this year's International Women's Day is 'Women's Rights are Human Rights'.

According to a Bangla daily; one woman becomes victim of violence every hour in the country.

# The endless wait

FROM PAGE 1

and it is wrong to say there is a legal bar," said Prof Abu Ahmed.

The BMDC, an independent body, can take action against any registered medical practitioner if found guilty, but only two doctors have been subjected to disciplinary action since 1971 and their registration was cancelled temporarily.

"Most complainants fail to fulfil the criteria for a formal charge and about 90 per cent of such complaints are rejected," said the registrar.

A number of patients, preferring anonymity, said the BMDC does not consider some complaints as the accused doctors often exert influence on it -- an allegation rejected by the registrar.

"Anyone is free to lodge a complaint, but it has to be valid so that we can process the case. Many complainants don't provide required information or give up halfway through without submitting documents," said Dr M Arman Hossain, assistant registrar.

Another complication arose after death of the chairman of the disciplinary committee, Professor Anis Waiz, last year.

The BMDC needs to call a general meeting to elect a new chairman, which was not possible.

The council comprises members of parliament, senior officials of the army medical corps, health directorate, deans of medicine faculties of universities, legal experts and private medical practi-

tioners. Many pending cases have been resolved through negotiations allegedly under pressure from the accused, said sources.

"Inaction of the BMDC leaves doctors with absolutely no responsibility towards the patients," says a patient.

The maximum punishment the BMDC can execute is cancel registration of a doctor permanently or temporarily.

## Rice import

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The FPMU report said, "In the beginning of December 2002, the (rice) price came down slightly but again started to increase from the last week of December, 2002. The main cause was supply shortfall due to foggy weather, which hampered rice husking as well as transportation."

Wholesalers however also blame the frequent shifts in import duty structures for erratic price behaviour.

To protect the slide in foreign exchange reserve, the government imposed 100 per cent margin on letters of credit (L/C) for rice import in December last. Later, it also imposed supplementary duty.

On February 17, duty on rice was again slashed from 29 per cent to 7.5 per cent by doing away with the 3 per cent per advance income tax and 3 per cent development surcharge in addition to duty reduction.

## 3 cops hurt in gunfight with criminals, gang leader held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Three policemen, including the officer-in-charge of Boalia police station were injured during a shootout between a criminal gang and police yesterday, sources said.

Acting on a tip-off, Boalia police raided a club at Fudkipara around 7:00pm to arrest Farhad Masud Hasan, a listed criminal and chief of Farhad-Benji group.

Farhad and his men fired on police from inside the club, resulting in a shootout that lasted for about 30 minutes.

Police, however, managed to arrest Farhad who has about two dozen criminal cases against him.

The injured policemen are OC of Boalia thana Aslam Iqbal, sub-inspector of the detective branch Arshad Ali and an unidentified police constable.

## Jewellery shop looted at Jessore

UNB, Jessore

Robbers looted a jewellery shop in the town on Friday night.

Sources said a gang of robbers entered the Janopriyo Jewellery shop at Tower Market at the dead of night and took away 450 tolas of gold ornaments.

The owner of the shop, Biswanath Sarker, came to the shop yesterday morning and found the collapsible gate and door open.

Two night guards of the market had gone into hiding after the incident.

Police arrested a night guard and five security personnel -- Abdul Haq, Zulfikar, Alokech Devnath, Sukur Ali and Loskor Ali -- for interrogation.

# Six judges' jobs

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"As a result, the long heritage of judiciary, constitutional transparency and accountability are being questioned," they said adding that the government is creating a lack of confidence in the judiciary by ignoring the recommendation of the Chief Justice time and again.

They said that independence and dignity of the judiciary will be impaired if the long tradition of appointing judges as per recommendation of the Chief Justice is not considered and appointments are made as per the choice of the head of the executive branch of the government.

Expressing solidarity with the ongoing movement of the Supreme Court Bar Association, they demanded a settlement of the issue of confirmation of the six additional judges of the High Court.

"We think that the matter should be resolved in light of the recommendation made by the Chief Justice in accordance with the constitutional convention for the sake of democracy and rule of law," said the citizens.

The signatories to the statement included Kabir Chowdhury, Vinod Bihari Chowdhury, Umratul Fazl, Debesh Chandra Bhattacharya, Kalim Sharafi, Santosh Gupta, Mazharul Islam, Sheikh M Shahidullah, Mustafa Nurul Islam, KG Mustafa, KM Subhan, Emdad

Hossain, KM Shafiqullah, CR Dutta, Abu Osman Chowdhury, Kaiyum Chowdhury, Wahidul Haq, Kamruzzaman, Hasan Azizul Haq, Anupam Sen, BK Jahangir, Bidhan Krishna Sen, Rangalal Sen, Mazhar Al Qaderi, Kamal Lohani, Sumita Devi, Syed Shamsul Haq, Mamtazuddin Ahmed, Chitra Bhattacharya, Belal Chowdhury, Hayat Mahmud, Ajoy Roy, AK Azad Chowdhury, Ali Anwar, Zulfikar Matin, Bazlur Rahman, Ekhlashuddin Ahmed, Shahed Kamal, Habibur Rahman Milon, Nirmalendu Goon, Mohadev Saha, Shamsul Huda Harun, Abed Khan, Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury, Ramendu Majumdar, Rabiul Hussain, Rashid Haider, Anwar Syed Haq, Asaduzzaman Noor, Aly Zaker, Abul Bayes, Yafes Osman, Rafiqunnabi, Hashem Khan, Ahad Chowdhury, Panna Kaiser, Kabori Sarwar, Ferdousi Majumdar, Rawshan Jahan Sathi, AAMS Arefin Siddique, Abul Momen, Rashidi Mahbub, Ferdousi Priyobhashini, Sultana Kamal, Baby Moudud, Shahriar Kabir, Muntasir Mamun, Masud Parvez, Harun Habib, Alamgir Kumkum, Nasiruddin Yusuf, Mannan Hira, Mostafa Jalal Mohiuddin, Abul Bark Alvi, Golam Qudus, Badal Jahann, Shamim Akhter, Sara Zaker, Meghna Guha Thakurta, Tarana Halim, Shyamali Nasrin Chowdhury, Liakat Ali Lucky, Kazi Mukul and Kazi Arif.

Police said Masud was crushed under the wheels of a speeding bus on Jessore-Magura road near Manoharpur Bazaar while crossing the road in the morning.

Al Amin died on the spot when a truck knocked him down on Jessore-Kaliganj road near Bijoyanagar Primary School.

The bodies were sent to Jessore General Hospital morgue for autopsy.

Police rushed to the spot, recovered the bodies and sent those to hospital morgue for autopsies.

Seven of the injured are Idris Ali, 24, Shafiqul Islam, 25, and Mahfujur Rahman, 28, of Joypurhat district, Wahidul Islam, 32, of Laksham, Comilla, Momtaz Ali, 25, and Ruhul Amin, 28, of Naogaon, Afzal Hossain, 35, of Nilphamari.

They were admitted to Sirajganj hospital.

In Jessore, two people were killed in separate road accidents in Sadar upazila yesterday.

The dead were identified as Masud, 28, son of Golam Mostafa of Jogipara village, and Al Amin, 9, son of Shahjahan of Bijoyanagar village.

## Forgery case 2 IFIC Bank officials, one businessman asked to appear before court

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court, Dhaka yesterday directed two high officials of the International Finance and Investment Corporation (IFIC) Bank and a businessman to appear before the court on April 12 in a forgery case.

The accused are Mohammad Abdus Sattar Mia, Vice-president and Manager at IFIC's head office, its First Assistant Vice-president AKM Shafiqul Alam at its federal office and Mohammad Faruk, Director of Madina Metal Industries Private (Pvt) Ltd, Lalbagh.

Mohammad Abdul Wahid, Managing Director of Madina Metal Industries, filed the case on March 6 against the three, accusing them of misappropriating raw materials worth Tk 36,99,640.

In his complaint, Wahid said raw materials worth Tk 36,99,640 of the industry was stocked at IFIC's warehouse at 52, Haji Ballu Road, Lalbagh in 1995. The two bank officials in collusion with Faruk misappropriated those, he said.

Barrister Mahbub Uddin Khokon moved the case on behalf of the complainant.

## ICT course

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The Ministry of Science and Information Communication Technology has proposed to introduce the course from 2005 in schools and colleges at the 64 district headquarters.

Before that, a committee of experts in the field is to produce the curriculum.

Moreover, as the introducing such course would require the installation of large number of personal computers at the institutions, a full-fledged computer laboratory is to be established at each school and college.

The authorities concerned will also appoint teachers and produce textbooks prior to the launching of the course.

The Prime Minister's Office (PMO) included the matter in the ICT task force and asked the ICT ministry and education ministry to work jointly.

To increase computer literacy, the government has already started distributing computers at various educational institutions.